

TO MEDIA

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INDEPENDENCE HEALTH SYSTEM MAKES TOP GRADES AT NATIONAL, STATE LEVEL FOR CARDIAC CARE, SURGERY

Westmoreland Hospital Named Among America's Best by Healthgrades

GREENSBURG, PA, September 18, 2023 ... Patients with heart disease need not wonder where they should go for exceptional, state-of-the-art cardiac care. Regardless of the severity of their condition, they can expect expert clinicians and advanced treatment options from Independence Health System Westmoreland Hospital that places the hospital in the top 5 percent of the nation's hospitals for excellence in cardiac surgery and top 10 percent of hospitals nationwide for cardiac care.

For the second consecutive year, Independence Health System Westmoreland Hospital is rated among the nation's best for cardiac surgery by Healthgrades in its America's 50 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Surgery™ and one of only 12 hospitals in the state of Pennsylvania to make its America's 100 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Care™ (2022-2023).

For three straight years, Independence Westmoreland Hospital also is a repeat Five-Star recipient of specialty excellence honors for Coronary Bypass Surgery and

Coronary Intervention Procedures from Healthgrades.

Likewise, Westmoreland Hospital is ranked among the Top 5 hospitals in Pennsylvania for Cardiac Surgery in 2023.

Healthgrades evaluated patient mortality and complication rates for 31 of the most common conditions and procedures at nearly 4,500 hospitals across the country to identify the top-performing hospitals for specialty care. This year's analysis revealed significant variation in patient outcomes between America's 50 Hospitals for Cardiac Surgery and America's 100 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Care and hospitals that did not receive these distinctions. From 2019-2021, patients treated at hospitals receiving the America's 50 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Surgery Award™ have, on average, a 56.0% lower risk of dying than if they were treated in hospitals that did not receive the award. Additionally, patients treated at hospitals that received the America's 100 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Care Award™ have, on average, a 29.0% lower risk of dying than if they were treated in hospitals that did not receive the award. Statistics are based on Healthgrades analysis of MedPAR data for years 2019 through 2021 and represent three-year estimates for Medicare patients only..

“We commend Independence Health Westmoreland Hospital for their ongoing commitment to providing high-quality care to patients undergoing Cardiac Surgery and being treated for Cardiac Care,” said Brad Bowman, MD, Chief Medical Officer and Head of Data Science at Healthgrades. “Consumers can feel confident that America's 50 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Surgery and America's 100 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Care have demonstrated their ability to deliver consistently exceptional outcomes.”

In 2023, Independence Health System Westmoreland Hospital and Latrobe Hospital also are lauded with various specialty excellence honors across the spectrum of care. The hospitals received Healthgrades' coveted five-star ratings.

Consumers can visit [Healthgrades.com](https://www.healthgrades.com) to learn more about how Healthgrades measures hospital quality and access a complete 2023 Specialty Excellence Awards and Ratings Methodology.

“Achieving and maintaining this level of performance takes an exceptional team delivering both outpatient and hospital-based care,” noted James Adisey, MD, medical director of the Heart, Lung and Vascular program for Independence Health System-Westmoreland area. “Key to these varied accomplishments is a robust complement of electrophysiologists, interventional

and noninvasive cardiologists, cardiothoracic surgeons and advanced practice providers and their respective support staff. The expertise is of the highest caliber found in hospitals anywhere in Pennsylvania and across the nation, and we continue to attract top-notch clinicians to the program because of the high standards we set for patient care.”

Independence Health System is committed to delivering this level of cardiovascular care across its Western Pennsylvania service area.

“While we are gratified to be recognized year after year for the quality of care we provide, it is our community that benefits when patients know their healthcare providers are top tier performers who provide the most advanced treatment options. Our clinical strengths are essential to ensuring the best possible patient outcomes which in turn promotes patient confidence,” noted Independence Health System cardiothoracic surgeon Hiroyuki Tsukui, MD, PhD, medical director of Westmoreland’s cardiothoracic surgery program, which also includes surgeons Michael H. Culig, MD, MMM, and Mitsugu Ogawa, MD, PhD.

Earlier this year, the cardiothoracic team began offering robot-assisted heart bypass surgery and heart valve repair. Such minimally invasive surgeries result in shorter hospital stays, reduced pain and accelerated recovery times, among other benefits. These offerings are just the latest in a broad range of state-of-the-art procedures including transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) and transcarotid artery revascularization (TCAR).

The cardiothoracic surgeons at Independence Health System are no strangers to high quality ratings, as they are similarly recognized by the Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), which ranks Westmoreland’s heart surgery program among the top 2 percent nationwide.

This honor comes in the form of a distinguished three-star rating from STS for patient care and outcomes in three separate categories: aortic valve replacement combined with coronary artery bypass grafting (AVR+CABG), isolated aortic valve replacement (AVR), and isolated coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG). Historically, less than 10 percent of all programs within the STS database achieve this elite standing.

The three-star rating denotes the highest category of clinical quality within the STS rating system, and is considered one of the most sophisticated and highly regarded overall measures of quality in healthcare, rating the benchmarked outcomes of cardiothoracic surgery programs in the United States and Canada. The star rating is calculated using a combination of quality measures for specific procedures performed by an STS Adult Cardiac Surgery Database participant.

“Independence Health System remains committed to sharing its results in a transparent way because such reporting allows patients the opportunity to validate the clinical expertise of their local healthcare team against concrete measures for excellence applicable to health systems nationwide,” added Dr. Culig.

Nationally recognized for quality care, Independence Health System comprises Butler Memorial, Clarion, Frick, Latrobe and Westmoreland Hospitals with a combined bed count of 925. With more than 1,000 physicians and advanced practice providers and 7,300 employees, the System is now the third largest in western Pennsylvania serving a population base of 750,000 in a footprint spanning more than 10 counties.

The System includes tertiary programs that are rated among America's best for cardiac care and surgery by Healthgrades in its America's 100 Best and America's 50 Best designations, and among the Top 5 in Pennsylvania in Cardiac Surgery. In similar fashion, the prestigious Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) bestowed its top three-star rating. Historically, less than 10 percent of programs within the STS data base achieve this elite standing. The hospitals of Independence Health System also have earned a host of accolades from such prestigious outlets and sources as US News and World Report, Newsweek Magazine, the American College of Radiology, the American College of Cardiology, the American College of Surgeons, the Joint Commission, Leapfrog and the American Heart/Stroke Association.

Locally owned and locally controlled, Independence Health System offers its patients low-cost, high-quality care across the care spectrum in such specialties as cardiology, cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, orthopedics and sports medicine, minimally invasive and robotic surgery, women's health and obstetrics, emergency medicine, behavioral health and primary care. Its network of outpatient centers sees more than 1.2 million visits annually. The homecare division further supports patients at all stages of life with home health and hospice services.

Independence Health System continues to change the healthcare landscape in western Pennsylvania by meeting patient needs through superb physician expertise, outstanding nursing, the latest in technology and programmatic depth.